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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
THE DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

July 19, 1962

TO : The Secretary
THROUGH: S/S
FROM : DNR - Roger Hilman
SUBJECT: Soviet Intentions on Berlin

CATEGORY "A"

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At Mr. Kohler's request we have prepared an updated appraisal of Soviet intentions on Berlin, taking account of your conversation with Dobrynin on July 12, the Tass statement of the same date, Khrushchev's interview with American newspapermen on July 13 and the Soviet note of July 14. We do not deal with the President's July 17 talk with Dobrynin.

Although Moscow does not appear to have made either a final assessment of the probable outcome of the present bilateral talks or a decision on its own future course of action, we believe that the Soviet Union intends to continue the talks for the time being.

However, continuation of the Berlin crisis imposes a strain on the Soviet Union, and Moscow appears to be considering as a possible alternative some form of scaled-down peace treaty, i.e., one that could be delayed or that could be carried out in installments. Moscow will apparently use the current talks (1) to explore the possibility of a negotiated agreement, (2) to obtain a clear estimate of the risks involved in implementing various forms of a separate peace treaty, and (3) to prepare a favorable record for public use in case it decides to go ahead with a separate peace treaty.

Dobrynin's latest proposal for removing Western contingents within four years is nothing more than an ingenious variant of the proposal which Khrushchev advanced privately to Salinger in May and publicly in his July 10 speech. Still other variants may also be advanced in the hope of drawing the United States into a discussion of the status of Western forces in West Berlin and of eliciting a Western counterproposal. Moscow undoubtedly realizes that if they concentrate exclusively on the single issue of Western troop presence the talks will lead to an impasse. There are indications that if the Soviets do not decide to conclude a separate treaty, they may wish to allow themselves more room for maneuver by renewing discussion of other issues.

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Reviewed by: Elijah Kelly Jr.

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The Soviet note of July 14 rejecting the proposal for four-power talks on local incidents suggests that the Soviets believe that with the decline in shooting incidents they have the local situation under control. As a result Moscow may now feel able to step up harassments as a means of keeping up pressure on the West.

Moscow's Indecision

Moscow apparently has not yet made either an assessment of what the outcome of the present talks is likely to be or a decision as to its future course of action. For the present the Soviets apparently intend to continue the bilateral talks in order to further explore possibilities for a negotiated settlement, to form a clearer estimate of the likely US response to unilateral Soviet actions and to develop a record of "reasonable" Soviet proposals which have been rejected by the West. The Soviets do not appear to have any rigid time table for the negotiations and since dropping the year end deadline last fall have consistently avoided any attempt to introduce a new deadline.

However, prolonged continuation of the present Berlin deadlock is imposing a variety of strains on the Soviet Union. Khrushchev appears to be open to criticism within the bloc and at home from several different points of view. By precipitating the Berlin crisis he has brought on an intensified arms race which the Soviet Union can ill afford. He has increased the risk of a war for which the USSR is incompletely prepared, and in which it might be defeated. In order to keep up an atmosphere of tension for the purpose of maintaining pressure on the West, he has had to give up a more flexible and in the long run more promising policy of dealing with the West. And, from the Communist standpoint he has not accomplished what he set out to do.

Possible Alternatives

There appears to be compelling reason for the Soviet Union to wish to conclude at least the current phase of the Berlin crisis, and Moscow seems to be re-examining the alternatives open to it.

On the one hand the USSR could make major concessions in order to secure a negotiated agreement — perhaps on the lines of the US *modus vivendi* proposal or conceivably an interim agreement. Such a move would from the Soviet point of view constitute a serious setback, though it would not preclude Moscow's attempting to renew its demands on a more propitious occasion in the future. If Khrushchev indeed believes that Berlin may die on the vine — as he told a group of American newspapermen — this alternative may not be entirely unacceptable to him.

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At the other extreme Moscow could sign and implement the long threatened separate peace treaty. Khrushchev is doubtless aware of the grave risk entailed and (to the extent that in his June 9 conversation with Italian trade minister Preti and in his July 10 speech he claimed military parity with the US and did not revert to claims of military superiority over the US) he has indicated that he is also aware of the present balance of military power. We continue to believe that the Soviets will not take that risk.

In recent weeks Moscow has apparently begun considering the idea of a scaled-down peace treaty, that is one which would not be entirely implemented immediately after signature.

Scaled-Down Peace Treaty

This approach could afford the Soviet Union an opportunity to lessen the risk by implementing the peace treaty in installments. Khrushchev indicated that he was considering such an approach when he told [] that after the signature of a peace treaty the East Germans would assume control of access in a gradual, step-by-step manner. He further stated that he did not fear the risk of nuclear war because of each step he would avoid giving the US cause for a vigorous reaction. Khrushchev appears to have used much the same line in his conversation [] and it has reappeared in rumors of early signature of a separate peace treaty now circulating in Geneva. b-1 a-3

The idea of a scaled-down treaty was hinted at obliquely in the communique of the June 7 meeting of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee and the TASS Statement of July 12. Both stated that after a peace treaty West Berlin would be "regarded" as a free city rather than saying that a free city would be established. The statements by using this new verb suggested that the change would be external and in some way incomplete.

The TASS statement also suggested Soviet consideration of a scaled-down peace treaty by reflecting a point which [] has reappeared in the current rumors of an early separate peace treaty, i.e. that the peace treaty would be so implemented that it would not provide the West with a clear issue on which to take a firm stand. The TASS statement said that aggravation of the situation because of the German peace treaty "will occur only if the other side wants to provoke it." b-1 a-3

Khrushchev told [] in this connection that the signature of a peace treaty would not be followed by a blockade of Berlin or an attempt to dislodge Western troops stationed there, but merely by cutting off of military access. His remark is open to question. b-1 a-3

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Khrushchev is well aware of the seriousness of such a step, and his statement may have been intended as a means of impressing his listeners (and indirectly the West) with his determination and possibly as a device to sound out Western reaction rather than as a statement of actual intent.

We believe that the Soviets have not yet decided on precisely how a scaled-down treaty would be implemented — obviously the scaled-down treaty approach would be open to a wide variety of implementation programs — and will use the bilateral talks to form a better estimate of what the West might tolerate.

Negotiating Tactics

Moscow appears to have three principal objectives in the current bilateral talks: to explore the possibilities of Western concessions and a negotiated agreement, to find the limits of Western tolerance for measures to be taken in connection with the signature of a separate peace treaty when and if Moscow opts for that course, and finally to build a public record of seemingly reasonable Soviet proposals which the West has rejected.

At the moment the Soviets are concentrating attention in the talks on the issue of the presence of Western troops in West Berlin. Dobrynin in his last conversation introduced a new variant of the proposal which Khrushchev first made in his private conversation with Salinger and surfaced publicly on July 10. Khrushchev had proposed that occupation troops be replaced by troops from two small NATO countries plus two small Warsaw Pact countries to serve as UN police forces in West Berlin for a period of three to five years. Dobrynin's variation would have the UN police forces consist of one half American, British and French troops and the other half a tripartite mixture of troops from small NATO, small Warsaw Pact and neutral countries, with the police forces to be reduced by 25 percent annually and phased out completely in four years. The Soviets probably did not expect the US to accept Dobrynin's new variant — and probably will not expect it to accept other variants which they may propose in the future — but they

1. Playing with the composition of UN forces, the distinction between occupation and police forces and the time element, the Soviets can, if they wish concoct other variants. The Soviets might even go so far as to propose leaving the present Western forces in West Berlin as UN police forces either for a stipulated period of time, or possibly without a deadline, on the assumption that once the forces had become UN troops the USSR might then prevail on the UN at a future date to effect their reduction or withdrawal.

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presumably hoped to draw the US into a discussion of some form of reduction in the number of Western troops or of some change in their status, and may have hoped to elicit a counterproposal which, if nothing else, established the issue as a negotiable one.

The Soviets presumably realize that their current concentration exclusively on the issue of troop presence threatens to lead the talks up a blind alley. If Moscow does not reach an early decision on signing a separate peace treaty, it will not wish to create an impression that the topics for further talks have been exhausted, and may seek to create more room for maneuver in the negotiations by broadening the agenda, either by introducing some new subject or by returning to a second reading of topics — including Soviet demands for an East German role in control over access — which have been discussed but by no means settled.

At the moment, signs point in contradictory directions. The July 12 TASS statement expressed the Soviet demand for a Western concession on the troop issue in what amounted to an ultimatum linking the separate treaty threat sharply with this one issue; if the US insisted on keeping West Berlin as a NATO military base, it said, then the bloc would have to sign a separate peace treaty. However, Khrushchev's interview with American newspapermen on the following day contained a subtle hint that the Soviet Union may wish to cease concentrating so exclusively on the troop issue. The Soviet-edited transcript of his remarks changed Khrushchev's description of the troop issue as the main obstacle in the talks to "one of" the main obstacles. Also suggestive was Khrushchev's declining — so as not to embarrass the US he said — to list areas of mutual understanding which had been reached in the talks; earlier, the listing of those points had been a device for focussing attention on the troop issue as the principal issue which remained unresolved.

Pressure Tactics

So long as the negotiations continue Moscow is likely to wish to maintain pressure on the West to make concessions.

The Soviet note of July 14 rejecting the Western proposal for four-power discussion of local incidents suggests that, with the decline in shooting incidents in Berlin, Moscow is no longer so concerned over the possible need to reassert its presence to preserve order if the local situation deteriorated. The Soviets may now feel free to step up harassments without concern for adverse reactions in the city proper. At this writing it is not clear whether the two instances of close passes at Western planes by MIGs on July 17 were isolated events or the beginning of a new series of incidents in the

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air corridors. Other forms of harassment of access routes could be applied at any time. In addition to actual harassments, rumors of impending Soviet or East German moves are likely to be planted as a means of attacking West Berlin morale.

It should be noted that pressure tactics may not necessarily be limited to harassment or threats of harassment. Moscow may attempt to exert political pressure by linking its position on Berlin with other issues which it believes may be desired by the West or by some segments of Western opinion. As they build their public record of "reasonable" offers in the negotiations, the Soviets may add hints of a summit meeting — with its implication of a reduction in tension and war danger — to make its Berlin proposals superficially more attractive.

Moscow might do much the same thing by hinting that progress on disarmament could be made if the West were more forthcoming on Berlin. It appears unlikely that Moscow will greatly modify its stand on central issues related to general and complete disarmament. Public discussion of Western concessions on a test ban which may result from the new data acquired in the Vela test series may have caused the Soviets to postpone any move they had planned in order to first see what the West had to offer. In any case the USSR at present appears to be more interested in its next test series than in a test ban. However, the Soviets may wish to give at least an appearance of movement on some other disarmament topics. The inclusion in the Soviet draft treaty of a new article incorporating US proposals for rapid communication among heads of governments and for the exchange of military missions — items which Polish delegate Lachs has indicated might also be discussed as separate measures as well as in the context of total disarmament — suggests that the Soviets may use the topic of preventing war by accident or miscalculation as a subject for such a move.

INFORMATION
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12/07
JUL 19 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. McGEORGE BUNOY
THE WHITE HOUSE

Subject: Intelligence Assessment of
Soviet Intentions in the
Berlin Crisis

The attached memorandum is an intelligence
analysis of Soviet intentions in the Berlin
talks. It was prepared in order to provide
the Secretary with an up-to-date assessment
prior to his departure for Geneva.

W. C. Johnson
William H. Brubeck
Executive Secretary

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Enclosure:

Memorandum, dated
July 19, 1962.

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